



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of

HANMER

Atty. Ref.: 540-190

Serial No. 09/517,089

Group: 3721

Filed: March 6, 2000

Examiner: S. Tawfik

For: VACUUM PACKAGING OF ARTICLES

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February 27, 2002

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, DC 20231

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APR 30 2003

Sir:

TECHNOLOGY CENTER R3700

RESPONSE

This is responsive to the second Election/Restriction Requirement mailed February 11, 2002 (Paper No. 9), the date of response to which is March 11, 2002.

Applicant elects with traverse the invention of Group III directed to claims 6-18.

The traversal mailed January 14, 2002 with respect to the previous restriction requirement is herein incorporated by reference. It is noted that the Examiner contacted applicant's undersigned representative on January 29, 2002, requesting an oral election. However, applicant was unable to provide an oral election, because the Examiner was unable to set out any rational basis for restricting the claims. Applicant pointed out that independent claim 1 was duplicated in its entirety in newly written claim 6, but with an

added limitation. Thus, claim 6 is similar to independent claim 1 with a dependent claim written in independent form.

Further discussions with the Examiner's supervisor, SPE Rada, did not clarify the basis for Examiner Tawfik's restriction requirement, and thus the basis for the restriction requirement is respectfully traversed. However, notwithstanding the restriction requirement, applicant elects claims 6-18 drawn to the method for vacuum packaging. Applicant also suggests that claim 1 is generic to the method represented in claims 6-18, and therefore claim 1 should be included as generic to Groups I and III. Inclusion of independent claim 1 is also respectfully requested.

Having responded to all objections and rejections set forth in the outstanding Official Action, applicant elects the invention of Group III and specifically claims 6-18 with traverse in the above-identified application. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a brief telephone or personal interview will facilitate allowance of these claims, he is respectfully requested to contact applicant's undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

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